



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq
DSN (NIPR) 318-827-6101
DSN (SIPR) 302-243-5104
keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
3rd ESC Release #090506-7
May 8, 2009

Transportation first sergeant awarded St. Christopher medallion

EDWARDS

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-West, Iraq — First Sergeant Keith Edwards, first sergeant, 51st Transportation Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, was presented with the Honorable Order of St. Christopher medallion in front of the transportation company's headquarters here April 27.

Brig. Gen. Michael Lally, commanding general, 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Joint Base Balad, presented the award to Edwards.

"I spoke with First Sergeant Edwards before this ceremony and he didn't tell me what he had done, he told me what his company had done," said Lally. "People like Edwards take pride in what their units have done, and that's why they're great leaders."

The Mannheim, Germany-based transportation company, the 51st Transportation Co., provides convoy security and line haul support to bases in Multi-National Division – North.

The award was bittersweet for the outgoing first sergeant, who was leaving for the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy after three years in the 51st Transportation Co.

-more-

EDWARDS/2-2-2

But Edwards, a Grenada, Miss., native, said he was proud to be recognized.

“It was an honor,” said Edwards. “It shows the confidence that my leaders have in me that put me in for it.”

Edwards, who has served in the transportation corps since he enlisted straight out of high school in 1984, and who is currently on his third deployment to Iraq, said he joined the Army for new challenges, and he’s never looked back.

“I just wanted to try something different, something new, and challenge myself,” Edwards said. “I’ve never regretted one day of it. I’ve loved every bit of it since I’ve been in.”

The Army’s Chief of Transportation approved the Military Order of Saint Christopher in 1998 to recognize those individuals who have made significant contributions to the U.S. Army Transportation Corps.

The “Honorable Order of Saint Christopher” recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated the highest standards of integrity and moral character; displayed an outstanding degree of professional competence; and served the Transportation Corps with selflessness.

St. Christopher is the patron saint of travelers and of the U.S. Army Transportation Corps. The Corps, established July 31, 1942, goes back to the Revolutionary War, when General George Washington appointed the first wagon master.

Edwards, who has served in Turkey, Japan, Korea, and through several combat tours, had some advice for Soldiers just getting started in transportation.

-more-

EDWARDS/3-3-3

“A lot of times you will have to make sacrifices, but hang in there and maintain your motivation,” Edwards said. “You are sustaining Soldiers; you are working for a great cause.”

-30-



Brig. Gen. Michael Lally (left), commanding general, 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Joint Base Balad, presents the “Honorable Order of St. Christopher” medallion to 1st Sgt. Keith Edwards, first sergeant, 51st Transportation Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, in front of the transportation company’s headquarters at Contingency Operating Base Q-West April 27. The order recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated the highest standards of integrity and moral character; displayed an outstanding degree of professional competence; and served the Transportation Corps with selflessness. The award was bittersweet for the outgoing first sergeant, who was leaving for the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy after three years in the 51st Transportation Co. But Edwards, a Grenada, Miss., native, said he was proud to be recognized. “It was an honor,” said Edwards. “It shows the confidence that my leaders have in me that put me in for it.” (Photo by Keith M. Anderson)